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fine specimens, one especially which is bronzed by hand, and in which all the relief work is reinforced by glueing pieces of fitted paper on the back, making a rich and durable surface. As all wall-paper is an imitation of something else, since no one fancies the wall of solid paper, the objection to its suggestion of leather is equally without foundation.

Those who would learn for themselves the justice or injustice of the criticisms upon William Morris to which I have referred above can also here have the opportunity of seeing every pattern designed by him since the beginning of his career as a manufacturer. They will find at the outset that he is not afraid of color, but in many cases has learned (as Gower Woodward expresses it when speaking of another department of art) when a soft neutral effect is required to employ, not a set of dead, lifeless shades, but a happy blending of rich contrasting colors, which become so absorbed into each other by being deftly manipulated, that a warm subdued effect is obtained; and Mr. Morris certainly realizes what Mr. Woodward considers perfect coloring, which is, as he happily expresses it, when the optic nerve sustains no friction in looking at the result. All through these designs the careful observer cannot fail to see the conscientious artist working with feeling and poetic taste under a perfect code of general laws, from which he never deviates. Every flower, every leaf, is conventionalized, every pattern tends to bi-symmetry and is admirably balanced; the tendency, as a rule, is upward, each part is subordinated to general effect, and all is harmony. Among the more recent patterns from Mr. Morris's pencil are the sunflower, chrysanthemum, pomegranate, branch, willow, and pimpernel. The branch with pomegranate frieze is a favorite combination of Mr. Morris himself.

Among other admirable specimens of workmanship to be seen this season are several tapestries produced by Fr. Beck & Co. They are after fabrics in which gold or silver threads are woven in the woof, and produce strikingly rich effects. The same house has a novelty in a leather paper which is produced by successive flockings, and is consequently solid and hard, no matter how high may be the relief of the figure.

It is a pleasure to welcome to this field of art manufacture two such names as those of Louis C. Tiffany and Samuel Colman, who will each this season present, through J. S. Warren & Co., several patterns, including field, frieze, and dado. Mr. Tiffany, by travel, association, and study, is eminently fitted for success in a field in which so many pictorial artists have failed under the limitations imposed by the press, the loom, or other processes of manufacture, and Mr. Colman has long been known in art circles as an exceptionally successful colorist.

Two of Mr. Tiffany's designs have already been put on paper. One on a light ground shows a delicate silver spider-web, spanning conventional leaves and branches, in four shades of gold. It is beautifully drawn, artistic in the highest degree, and marked by the strong individuality so characteristic of all the author's work. Before this reaches the reader the entire series by both artists will have been completed, and I am informed by those who saw the original designs that I run no risk in predicting for both gentlemen a gratifying success.

The result of their efforts will be watched with interest, since these are the first American artists of prominence to enter the field of industrial design, and their example cannot fail to excite others to emulation.

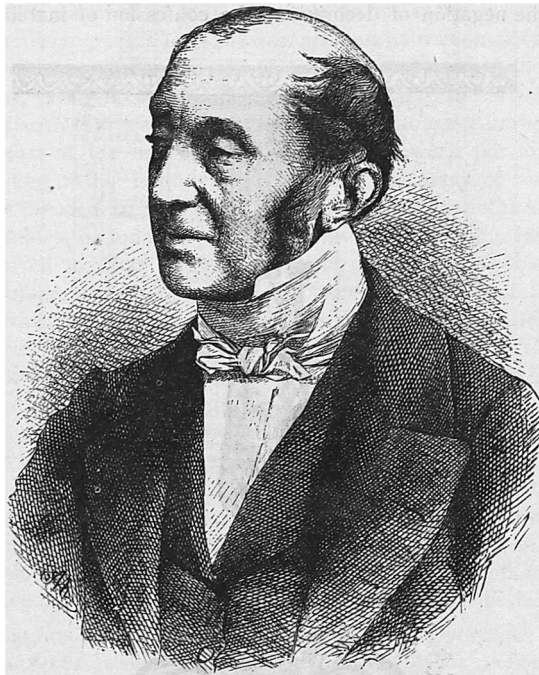
One thing is certain: in this new departure the American manufacturer has this spring taken a long stride forward, and started upon a course which cannot fail to lead to important changes in the methods of art manufacture in the country.

TOM A. KENNETT.

#### EASTLAKE AND HIS IDEAS.

##### I.

WHATEVER may have been the shortcomings of Sir Charles L. Eastlake as a painter—and we shall not attempt to rank him among eminent artists—or as a connoisseur of paintings—he was guilty of many grievous errors of judgment as Director of the London National Gallery—the credit must be accorded to him of having been the pioneer of the great movement in England for the cultivation of art in the household. The influence of this movement, as we all know, has been greatly felt



SIR CHARLES LOCK EASTLAKE.

in this country, where his name is as well known as in his own. It is as the reformer in the furnishing of our homes, and not as the Royal Academician, that we purpose chiefly to speak of him.

Born in 1793, at Plymouth, England, Charles L. Eastlake began his studies in art at the schools of the Royal Academy in 1809. A few years later he studied and copied in the galleries of Paris, and in 1815 he painted his first important picture, a life-sized portrait of "Napoleon on the Bellerophon." He spent some time sketching in Italy, Greece, and the East, and on

his reputation in the future. His notes to "Kugler's Handbooks of Painting," which were translated by Lady Eastlake, are of decided value, as are also his "Contributions to the Literature of the Fine Arts," and his "Materials for a History of Oil Painting." Nothing that Sir Charles Eastlake wrote, however, will be read in this country probably with so much interest as his "Hints on Household Taste," a fascinating volume, made up from essays contributed by him to The London Queen and The London Review. We cannot give a better impression of his ideas of the requirements of art in the household than by quoting freely from this book.

Before doing this, however, let us recur briefly to his work as a painter. His more important pictures are "Lord Byron's Dream" (1829), "Haidee" (1831), "Christ Lamenting over Jerusalem" (1841), and the "Escape of the Carrara Family from the Duke of Milan" (1850). "Pilgrims Coming in Sight of Rome," of which picture we have given an illustration, was painted in 1828, and was presented by Robert Vernon to the National Gallery. Eastlake, as a painter, progressed but little in public estimation from the time of his early works. His mannerisms of style became disagreeable, and his female faces, which at first charmed by their grave refinement and delicacy, both in conception and execution, became tiresome by frequent repetition.

Eastlake is doubtless entitled to the claim he puts forth, in the preface of his "Hints on Household Taste," of being the first to discuss the question of style and design in art manufacture in a manner sufficiently practical and familiar to insure the attention of the general public, without whose support, as every artist knows, all attempts in the direction of æsthetical reform are useless. His bold opinions, which in their time must have seemed radical in the extreme, naturally were freely assailed. His mediæval predilections were especially condemned, because at first they were not understood. The very mention of Gothic furniture being then associated with every thing inconvenient and pedantic, he had to explain that he recommended the readoption of no specific type of ancient furniture unsuited, whether in detail or general design, to the habits of modern life; that it was "the spirit and principles of the early manufacture which he desired to see revived, and not the absolute forms in which they found embodiment."

Yet that one may go as far back as the early part of the seventeenth century and find examples of household furniture the absolute form and construction of which may still serve as a model for the manufacturers of to-day, is evidenced by our illustrations of dining-room chairs, which Eastlake gives in his book from drawings made by him in the country mansion of the late Earl De La Warr, at Knole. There is a complete set of furniture there in the same style as these two chairs, and although it is nearly three hundred years old, it is still in excellent preservation. The sofa and chairs, we are told; "are constructed of a light-colored, close-grained wood, the rails and legs being properly pinned together and painted, where the framework is visible, with a red lacquer, which is ornamented with a delicate foliated pattern in gold. The stuff with which they are covered was originally a rose-colored velvet, which



"PILGRIMS COMING IN SIGHT OF ROME." BY SIR C. L. EASTLAKE.

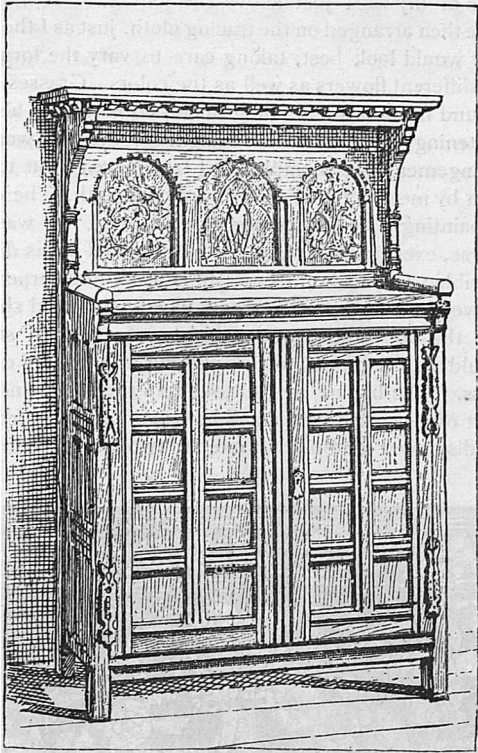
his return in 1823 exhibited his first picture at the Royal Academy. He was elected associate of that body in 1827, and Academician in 1830. In 1841 he was appointed secretary of the Royal Commission of Fine Arts, and in 1843 keeper of the National Gallery. He was elected President of the Royal Academy in 1850, when he was knighted. In 1855 he was appointed Director of the National Gallery. From this time he gave but little time to painting, devoting himself principally to the literature of art, and it will be to his writings on art more than to any thing else that he will owe

has now faded into a scarcely less beautiful silver gray. The backs and seats are divided into panels by a trimming composed of silk and gold thread, woven into a pattern of exquisite design, and are also decorated horizontally with a knotted fringe of the same material. The arm-chairs of the same set are of two kinds—one constructed with columnar legs like the smaller chair; the other framed after a more picturesque fashion, but painted in the same style. The side-rails which support the back are studded, over the velvet, with large round copper-gilt nails finished with a geometrical pat-

tern, while a large quatrefoil-headed nail marks the intersection of the framed legs below. The back consists of three rails, one at each side and one at the top, the lower rail being evidently, for comfort's sake, omitted. Between these three rails a stout canvas bag is stretched, stuffed, like a seat—which retains its elasticity to this day—with down or feathers, but to scarcely a greater thickness than an inch. Thus, without assuming the padded, lumpy appearance of a modern arm-chair, the back so constructed accommodates itself at once to the shoulders of the sitter, and forms a most luxurious support. The egg-shaped finials at each angle of the back are composed of wood, whipped over with thread silk, and decorated with gold braid and gilt nails." The costliness of the material and mode of decoration of such a chair made Eastlake fear that such furniture would never be revived for ordinary use in our own day. But, as he pointed out, the general principle of the design need involve no more expense in execution than that which is incurred in any good upholsterer's shop; and, had his useful life been spared for a few years longer, he would have had the satisfaction of knowing that excellent furniture constructed after the models he has given us is to be found in thousands of homes not only in his own, but also in this country, where his name has become a familiar household word. It is true that there is in the market much cheap, badly-constructed furniture called "Eastlake," and "made to sell" to persons who simply desire to be in the *fashion*; but the best upholsterers in England and in America have done work which, while probably not calculated to last for three hundred years, like the honest hand-made pieces at the seat of the Earl De La Warr, would have satisfied Sir Charles that the good seed he planted had not fallen on barren ground.

We strike the key-note of Eastlake's theory as to propriety in household furniture when he tells us that "the kitchen dresser, regarded from an artistic point of view, is really more reasonable in form and more picturesque than the dining-room sideboard; the servants' coal-box

ponderous curtains, which bade fair to stifle them before the morning. Let us fancy the gloom, the unwholesomeness, the absurdity of such a custom viewed

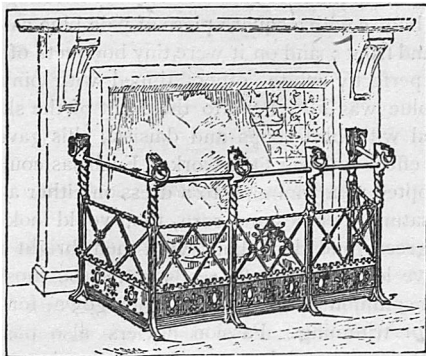


EASTLAKE CHIFFONIER.

by our modern notions of health and comfort, and remember, whatever the upholsterers may tell us, that the fashion of our furniture, too, includes follies at which posterity will smile."

There is perhaps no branch of manufacture more prolific in design than iron-work, and the variety of fenders, fireplaces, and stoves is positively bewildering. The vast majority of the patterns, however, tried by the Eastlake standard, are miserable. "I have before me," writes Sir Charles, "the catalogue of a well-known firm, which I have looked through without being able to discover more than one solitary instance of a tolerably good design. It is that of an ordinary sitting-room fireplace, executed in Berlin black iron, lined at the back with firebrick, fitted with a trefoil-headed 'drawer,' and decorated at the sides with sunk fleure-de-lis. The fenders, as usual, are elaborately vulgar. Manufacturers will persist in decorating them with a species of cast-iron ornament which looks like a bad imitation of rococo carved work. Almost all cast-iron ornament, excepting the delicate patterns in very low relief, is hopelessly ugly." The fender shown in the picture is a very good specimen of artistic metal-work for household use.

A marked characteristic of the Eastlake furniture designs is the almost total absence of mouldings and headings. To these, *applied* to wood-work, this honest hater of shams had a strong aversion. He says: "Mouldings were originally employed to decorate surfaces of wood or stone, which sloped either vertically or horizontally from one plane to another. Thus, the mouldings of a door represent the bevelled or chamfered edge of the stout framework which holds the



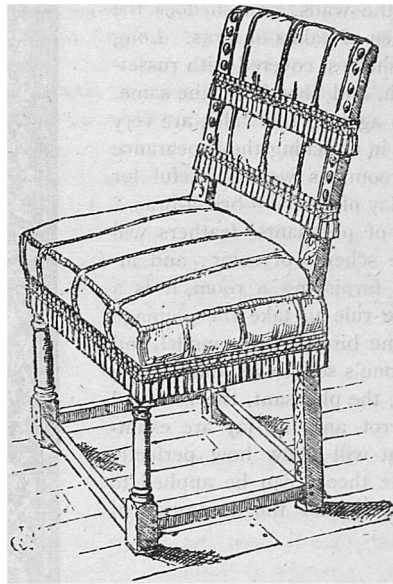
EASTLAKE FENDER.

slighter panels. It is obvious, therefore, that these mouldings ought to be worked in the solid wood, and form part of the framework referred to. Instead of this, in modern cabinet-work they are *detached slips* of

wood, glued into their places after the door has been actually put together. To such an absurdity is the system carried, that these applied mouldings are often allowed to project beyond the surface of the door-frame, and not unfrequently are repeated in the centre of the panel itself. The same fault may be found with the cornice which crowns the bookcase. It pretends to be solid framing, whereas in nine cases out of ten it could be pulled to pieces by a child's hand. The hinges, too, of cabinet doors are lamentably weak, and the reason of this is, that such hinges are reduced to a minimum in size and kept out of sight."

The system of French polishing furniture is justly condemned. Literally it is varnishing, and destroys all artistic effect in appearance, because the surface of wood thus lacquered can never change its color, or acquire that rich hue which is one of the chief charms of old cabinet-work.

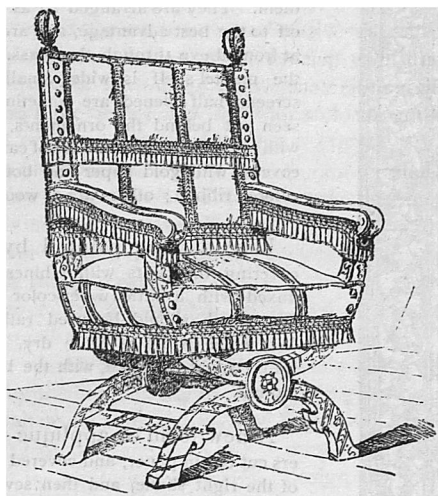
Bric-à-brac lovers, who rejoice to display their treasures on sideboards and over mantels, are indebted to Sir Charles Eastlake for the revival of the practice, although that plain, old-fashioned gentleman would be terribly shocked could he "revisit the glimpses of the moon" and see how his innocent suggestion has been abused. Speaking of the hideous sideboard of his time, he said: "It consists of a wide and deep shelf fitted with one or two drawers, and resting at each end on a cellaret cupboard. If this piece of furniture were constructed in a plain and straightforward manner, and were occasionally provided with a few narrow shelves at the rear for displaying the old china vases and rare orcelain, of which almost every house contains a few examples, what a picturesque appearance it might present at the end of a room! Instead of this, fashion once more steps in and twists the unfortunate buffet into all sorts of indescribable curves. It is bowed in front and 'shaped' at the back; the cupboard doors are bent inwards; the drawers are bent outwards, the



EASTLAKE CHAIR.

angles are rounded off; tasteless mouldings are glued on; the whole surface glistens with varnish, and the result is—eminently uninteresting. To fulfil the first and most essential principles of good design, every article of furniture should at the first glance proclaim its real purpose; but the upholsterers seem to think it betokens elegance when that purpose is concealed." Eastlake's design for a dining-room sideboard, which was published in *THE ART AMATEUR* last August, may be studied with interest in connection with the views here expressed.

The opinions of Sir Charles Eastlake are not to be dismissed in a single article. From the quotations we have made it will be readily understood that they represent in no way the mere caprice of a fanciful imagination, but embody the enunciation of the soundest principles in decorative art. As such they will be valuable, and will live long after what is known to the trade as Eastlake furniture shall have gone out of date and out of fashion, to give place perhaps to modifications of the same thing with new names. We shall resume the subject of the present article in our next issue, when we shall summarize with illustrations Eastlake's ideas as to furniture and decorations for the drawing-room and the bedroom.



EASTLAKE CHAIR.

than the illuminated scuttle in my lady's boudoir. It is not, of course, the use of rich material alone, or the elaboration of ornament but the misapplication of both, which leads to error in art manufacture. It would be extremely absurd to use gold or silver in making a coal-box; yet these metals, even in such a situation, would be as capable of artistic treatment as iron or copper. It would be the height of extravagance to construct a sideboard of cedar or sandal-wood, yet such materials could be well adapted to the purpose. But papier-maché ornaments on a scuttle or a buffet overlaid with vicious carving and artificial sheen have to answer a worse charge than that of mere extravagance. In the one case material and in the other decoration is utterly misapplied."

Eastlake holds justly that a room intended for repose ought to contain nothing which can fatigue the eye by complexity. "How many an unfortunate invalid," he says, "has lain helpless on his bed, condemned to puzzle out the pattern of the hangings over his head or stare at a wall which he feels instinctively obliged to map out into grass-plots, gravel-paths, and summer-houses, like an involuntary landscape-gardener? Time was when a large 'four-poster' was considered indispensable to every sleeping apartment, and night-capped gentlemen drew around their drowsy heads